**Staff Report of Public Comment Proceeding**

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| **Important Information Links** |
| [Announcement](https://www.icann.org/news/announcement-2016-03-05-en) |
| [Public Comment Box](https://www.icann.org/public-comments/op-budget-fy17-five-year-2016-03-05-en) |
| [View Comments Submitted](https://forum.icann.org/lists/comments-op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/) |

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| **Comment Period:** | |
| Open Date: | 5 March 2016 |
| Close Date: | 30 April 2016 |
| Staff Report Due Date: | 6 June 2016 |

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| **Draft ICANN FY17 Operating Plan and Budget and Five-Year Operating Plan Update** | | | | | |
| **Publication Date:** | | 6 June 2016 | | | |
| **Prepared By:** | | Xavier Calvez | | | |
|  | | |  | | |
| **Staff Contact:** | Xavier Calvez | | | **Email:** | [controller@icann.org](mailto:controller@icann.org) |
| **Section I: General Overview and Next Steps** | | | | | |
| ICANN’s strategic plan for Fiscal Years 2016–2020 was developed through a bottom-up, community-led process  and adopted by ICANN’s Board of Directors in October 2014. The strategic plan underpins ICANN’s Five-Year Operating Plan, which was developed with community input. It includes strategic goals with corresponding key performance indicators, dependencies, five-year phasing, and list of portfolios; and a five-year financial model.  The Board adopted the initial FY16–20 Five-Year Operating Plan in April 2016. ICANN updates it each year to reflect  what has been achieved and to refine planning for future years. The Five-Year Operating Plan is accompanied by a  Fiscal Year Operating Plan and Budget for the coming fiscal year.  ICANN published the FY17 draft update to its Five-Year Operating Plan, along with the draft FY17 Operating Plan and Budget, on 5 March 2016. ICANN also published a budget breakdown by both project and portfolio. These documents were presented at the ICANN 55 meeting in Marrakech at the start of a 57-day public comment period. We published more supporting documents during the public comment period. These included translations of the FY17 Operating Plan and Budget, and the publication of extra details on the 15 projects with the largest budgets.  During the public comment period, ICANN received several questions from different people and organizations, seeking clarification on aspects of the draft plans. Responses were prepared and posted to the public comment period.  Comments were received from nine community groups and two individuals. The comments received were more detailed than in previous years and when segmented by theme, amounted to 153 specific comments on 15 | | | | | |

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| **Name** | **Submitted by** | **Initials** |
| Root Server System Advisory Committee | Tripti Sinha | RSSAC |
| Country Code Names Supporting Organization  Strategy and Operating Plan Working Group | Giovanni Seppia | ccNSO- SOP |
| Registry Stakeholder Group | Stephane Van Gelder | RySG |
| Government Advisory Committee | Thomas Schneider | GAC |
| At-Large Advisory Committee | Alan Greenberg | ALAC |
| Generic Names Supporting Organization | James Bladel | GNSO |
| Business Constituency | Steve DelBianco | BC |
| Internet Services Provider and Connectivity  Provider Constituency | Wolf-Ulrich Knoben | ISPCP |
| Intellectual Property Constituency | Greg Shatan | IPC |

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| different topics. This is a significant growth – approximately 80 percent – on the feedback on the draft plans for  FY16.  After the public comment period, ICANN held calls with community members to improve its understanding of the comments received and to improve the quality of the response. Six [public calls](https://community.icann.org/x/yjiAAw) were held with the groups and individuals. These calls helped ICANN develop better responses and identify changes to make to the draft plans.  The updated Five-Year Operating Plan, and FY17 Operating Plan and Budget, will be presented to the ICANN Board for adoption towards the end of June 2016.  ICANN uses the comments and other feedback provided on its draft planning documents each year to identify areas of strength and areas where improvements are needed. They help us identify specific changes to the next year’s planning process. This is a part of ICANN’s commitment to continuous improvement. | | |
| **Section II: Contributors** | | |
|  | *When this report was prepared, a total of 12 community submissions had been posted to the forum. The contributors are listed below in chronological order by posting date with initials noted. When quotations are used in the narrative (Section III) they reference the contributor using initials.* |  |
| Organizations and Groups:  Individuals: | | |

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|  | **Name** | **Affiliation (if provided)** | **Initials** |  |
| Chuck Gomes | Personal comments | CG |
| Tom Barrett | EnCirca | TB |
|  | | | | |
| **Section III: Summary of Comments** | | | | |
|  | *General Disclaimer: This section is intended to broadly and comprehensively summarize the comments submitted to the forum, but not to address every specific position stated by every contributor. Readers interested in specific aspects of any of the summarized comments, or the full context of others, should refer to the specific contributions at the link referenced in the Important Information Links box.* | | |  |
| ICANN segmented comments thematically, and not based on the group or individual submitting them, to gain a better understanding of the comments and to help community members reading this report. The comment themes are listed here in alphabetical order and the analysis section provides a high-level assessment of the observations, questions, and requests. Responses to individual comments are provided in the tables at the end of this report.  The specific comments and ICANN’s responses will also be published as an Excel spreadsheet, to better enable  structured analysis by the community.   Budget Development Process   Communications and Engagement   Contractual Compliance   Financial Management   GDD Operations and gTLDs   Global Public Interest Framework   IANA Stewardship Transition   ICANN Operations   IT Projects   KPI Definition and Structure   Multistakeholder Engagement   People Development   Policy Development | | | | |

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|  Technical Engagement   Travel Funding   WHOIS | | |
| **Section IV: Analysis of Comments** | | |
|  | *General Disclaimer: This section provides an analysis and evaluation of the comments received along with explanations or any recommendations provided within the analysis.* |  |
| A large proportion of the comments received were requests for clarification. The content of a smaller proportion of the comments suggests a lack of community awareness of some aspects of the strategic plan that these operating plans are built on.  **Budget Development Process**  There was considerable satisfaction with the way the process is managed, with several good practices noted, including:   the use of the Ad Hoc planning working sessions   continuity of document structure from last year   the two-month public comment period   calls with the community.  There were also calls for improvements, including:   a consistent level of detail in plans from different parts of the organization   more delineation between the operating plan and budget   more clarity on Key Performance Indicators   tables showing the differences in spending between previous and planned years.  The percentage change between years will be included in the final FY17 documents. Other changes will be included in the lessons learned analysis, so that improvements can be identified for next year.  **Communications and Engagement** | | |

There were several comments regarding the scope and cost of communications and engagement activities. These included the languages supported by the Language Services Team and the distinction from Government Engagement. The descriptions for several portfolios will be expanded.

**Contractual Compliance**

There were a number of comments about the alignment of Contractual Compliance activities and the terms of the registry and registrar contracts. There were requests for more reporting on Contractual Compliance activities. There was also a correspondence on some of the comments relating to Contractual Compliance and these messages have been included in the full responses.

**Financial Management**

There were comments on different aspects of the ways ICANN manages finances. These included:

 controls

 the reserve fund

 budgeting for multiyear projects

 the new ERP system.

ICANN will be engaging with the community on these issues throughout FY17.

**GDD Operations and gTLDs**

Some requested clarification of the descriptions for several Global Domains Divisions (GDD) Operations and gTLD related portfolios. These portfolio descriptions will be improved, with some activities being consolidated under a single portfolio where they had originally been distributed between two.

**Global Public Interest Framework**

Some comments suggested a lack of familiarity with the community-led bottom-up process used to develop the strategic plan, and define this objective. There were comments about the objective itself and activities within its component goals, including:

 legal support

 AoC and organizational reviews

 empowering stakeholders.

Several portfolio descriptions will be expanded with additional detail.

**IANA Stewardship Transition**

A significant proportion of the comments focused on the organizational and budgetary impact of the IANA Stewardship Transition implementation. There is now more detail than was available when the draft FY17 plans were published in March. This section of the FY17 Operating Plan and Budget will be significantly updated to reflect the work that has been conducted with the community during March, April and May 2016.

**ICANN Operations**

There were comments and request for clarification on issues, including:

 ICANN’s office locations

 staffing and remuneration policies

 tools.

We have provided explanations for all these comments.

**IT Projects**

There was a request for clarification over the goal to raise the reliability of ICANN’s top-tier IT services to 99.999%. There was also a request for an improved sign-up service and its work will be accommodated through already budgeted activities.

**KPI Definition and Structure**

There were several requests for KPIs to be refined and for more information about how KPIs are measured. The development and refinement of KPIs is an ongoing process and a part of ICANN’s commitment to continuous improvement. These comments will be considered as we work to improve the KPIs we use to define and measure success.

**Multistakeholder Engagement**

There were comments and questions about the nature of and reason for ICANN’s work in multistakeholder engagement. We will expand some of the portfolio descriptions to provide more clarity in the final FY17 documents.

**People Development**

There were comments about ICANN’s development activities for staff and the community. There were also concerns that ICANN needs to retain technical skill for the security needs of its own network and services and for

the benefit of the community. We have explained the development activities and will be making some clarifications in the final planning documents. We will be retaining the technical skills needed for ICANN’s own network and the community.

**Policy Development**

Comments related to the way that policy development work is funded and supported. We plan to improve support in FY17 and we will look at making pilot programs a part of the core budget.

**Technical Engagement**

Some sought clarification on ICANN’s role in IPv6 deployment and universal acceptance of TLDs, and support for ICANN’s planned SSR activities. We have explained the reason for ICANN’s role in these activities and clarified what work is planned.

**Travel Funding**

There were six requests for extra travel funding and a request for a multi-year approach to planning for At-Large travel funding. ICANN is able to accommodate some of these requests and will work with ALAC on implementing its multiyear planning process.

**WHOIS**

There were two comments requesting clarification of why there are two portfolios addressing WHOIS. The portfolios focus on different work themes, so we will improve the wording in the portfolio descriptions to make this clearer.

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **16.** | As for the process of FY17 Budget review, the GNSO Council notes that significant improvements that have been made over the last few years with ICANN providing increased transparency and detail in both the budget and operating plans. We thank ICANN for their efforts in this regard.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  Thank you. We are glad you found it helpful.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

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| **17.** | We note the proposed increased responsibility going forward of the community, and specifically of this Council and Supporting Organization, for budgetary matters as  contained in the 2 April 2016 draft Bylaws proposal. This is  particularly illustrated by sections 22.4 (budget) and 22.5 (operating proposals) and by Annex D, articles 2.1 (f) and  2.1(c) and Annex E of said proposal. The empowered community will now have the power to reject budgets and operating plans once these have been proposed by ICANN.  In light of increasing community responsibility for the budget it is our view that there are still further transparency enhancements that need be implemented going forward so that we may properly discharge our new responsibilities in an informed fashion. As such it would be extremely helpful if in future years ICANN would provide:   A comparative spreadsheet listing line item amounts budgeted not only for the coming year, but also for the current fiscal year's budget, as well as, executed funds to date and/or projected, along with enumeration of the percentage difference in funding for particular line items between budget years.   Expenditure breakdowns of particular ICANN  divisions, so as to have a better understanding of all expenditures related to the policy process, which may be part of other areas (for example, one place to find the total budgeted amount for ICANN Legal across all mission areas),   Concrete examples of budgeted items and more  granularities letting the community know where and how funds are being spent in specific terms. For example, ICANN funded a portion of the Institute of Internet Diplomacy at the University of Southern | GNSO | **Response**  We agree that providing more information in the published documents could enhance transparency and accountability. It is also needed to enable the community to perform its responsibilities under the new Bylaws.  We are particularly grateful to the community members, who continue to provide valuable input on how to improve the quality and quantity of information in the Operating Plan and Budget documents. This input is supporting us in assessing how the community input can be incorporated into the process.  Regarding to the specific recommendations of the GNSO:  Work to develop forecasts by project and portfolio is ongoing. We are currently planning a long-term project. This project will evaluate the staff and systems resources needed to forecast costs by project. This means we cannot provide forecasts by project and portfolio for comparison purposes yet.  • Work to develop a budget by function is ongoing. This is a long- term project that requires ICANN, with community input, to define the ICANN functions. Once these functions are defined we will develop a process to develop a budget by function and capture, analyze and report actuals by function.  • We provide budget details by project and cost category for over  300 projects in the Operating Plan and Budget documents. More detail on specific line items budgeted is available but we believe we should continue to provide this information during the public comments process rather than included in the Operating Plan and Budget documents.  • The portion of the Institute of Internet Diplomacy at the University of Southern California that ICANN funded in FY16 was budgeted under goal 5.3 (Empower current and new stakeholders to fully participate in ICANN activities). |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
|  | California. It is not clear where that expenditure would appear in the budget.   FTE numbers should also be presented at a project  line level rather solely at the portfolio level.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf |  | • We present FTE at the portfolio level to avoid breaching the confidentiality of individual staff members’ compensation information. This could occur if the information is presented at the project level.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **29.** | **Contrasting with Goal 1.3**  Conversely, the Council takes notice that in support of Goals  1.1 & 1.2, believed to be devoted to ICANN’s engagement activities, is nearly twice the size in both FTE and dollar amounts to Goal 1.3[1]. The GNSO Council fully supports the requirements for global engagement, but we also recognize that this function is relatively new for ICANN with just over a  $19M annual budget. The Council also takes notice of very little interactions with the GSE to date (such as during weekend ICANN meetings) and intends to increase nearterm collaboration to better understand the execution of the global engagement’s goals and objectives for the organization and how these support the core functions of ICANN such as policy development activities. We take interest in the success of the engagement activities, because we recognize that we are on the receiving end of recurring participation growth. As it relates to the review of the FY17 draft budget, the GNSO seeks greater insight at the project level for engagement activities. This is an extension  of the types of requests made by GNSO stakeholders at  ICANN55.  [1] The Council also understands that of the $10.7M Goal 1.3 budget, that $3M devoted to Travel & Meetings for both staff and  supported community members. Thus, roughly 70% is  devoted to actual policy development.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  The Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) team inherited the role of the original Global Partnerships team (dating back to 2006-2008). Attracting new participants to ICANN and facilitating their stakeholder journey within ICANN are not new.  While the size of the team grew between 2013 and 2014, to fill engagement roles in the regions served by GSE, the team has remained consistent since  2015 with limited staff increases. GSE’s regions are:   Africa   Asia Pacific   Eastern Europe and Central Asia   Europe   Latin America and the Caribbean   Middle East   Oceania   North America   South America  We also have three functional engagement areas:   Civil Society   Global Business   The Technical Community.  The GSE team typically provides updates to ALAC and other groups at ICANN meetings. If the GNSO Council would be interested in a briefing on GSE activities, regional strategies and engagement we would be happy to provide one. This would to increase collaboration and understanding with the GNSO Council and other ICANN stakeholder groups and constituencies. We could meet at an ICANN meeting or during a pre or post-ICANN meeting webinar.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents** |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
|  |  |  | None but staff in GSE will speak with the GNSO Council about the possibility of a briefing on GSE activities |

**IT Projects**

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| Section Summary: This section excerpts comments and questions relating to IT Projects and ICANN’s responses to them, along with whether a change will be made in  the final documents. | | | |
| **103.** | Group Signup & Activity Management (continuation of Kavi Pilot during DMPM WG) – The Council notes that this is not listed within the multi-year projects. Is this allocated elsewhere in the budget for IT or Policy Development? The GNSO understand the tremendous value of a centrally managed tool that will organize and measure working group activities across the community. Not only will it enhance group management, but it will allow SO/AC leaders to better understand community resource utilization and  allocation. This will be an invaluable tool to begin to address issues with community volunteer fatigue.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  ICANN recognizes that providing services and systems to more effectively manage working groups is important and will provide benefits across a wide range of community activities. There is ongoing activity within ICANN to improve these services, including:   working group signup   roster   attendance management   improved collaboration tools.  The budget for this work is spread across several IT projects.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **116.** | DMPM Pilot (SO/AC Special Budget Request) – The GNSO Council submitted within the Special SO/AC Budget request to fund a GNSO Council approved pilot on certain requests for data and metrics for policy making. That request was more an advertisement than a request expected to be approved there. First, the Council feels that this type of requests does not meet the original intent of what Special SO/AC budgets requests and therefore we do not want to have those funds consume it. More importantly, the Council feels that the funding of special requests for data and metrics should be a part of the normal Goal 1.3 budget. To ensure that funds are available, the GNSO Council prefers to see a project level budgeted line item to meet the needs of the DMPM pilot. Should the pilot succeed, it can then be determined whether this remains an individual line item, or absorbed and allocated under the core policy budget.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  The availability to resource targeted requests for data and metrics for policy making on particular issues could indeed prove to be an important and critical component of informed policy development efforts as ICANN moves in to a post-transition environment. As noted by the GNSO Council, this is appropriately a matter of strategic importance properly addressed through the main annual budget process and not the Community Special Budget Request Process. Availability of funds for this purpose will be recommended to the Board so that appropriate pilot efforts can be pursued in FY17.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

**People Development**

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **136.** | The GNSO Council takes notice of the $1.1M increase in FY17 at 33 FTE for the 1.3 Goal which we understand to be dedicated to policy development and support with ICANN. We support this increase in FY17 but concern still exists as to whether this is enough. The GNSO has recently commenced work on three extensive PDPs (gTLD, RPM, RDS), in addition to other ongoing projects and reviews. We anticipate these being multi-year efforts, not including other issue deliberations outside of the GNSO for which we participate. The Council will continue to collaborate with Policy staff to understand if the resourcing is adequate.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  ICANN is committed to supporting and resourcing all necessary policy development work for the community. As noted by the GNSO Council, FY17 is slated to be an active year and we are geared to support that work. We have observed in the past that projected work often does not take place within anticipated community or budget time frames and endeavors to provide budget flexibility within the annual plan. To the extent additional resources are needed in FY17 to handle the increased workload, the  budget plan allows us to redirect or re-apportion resources to the area of greatest need when necessary.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **137.** | The GNSO Secretariat Support Program continues to exist as in kind support and as a separate line item. Is the program still under evaluation, is there consideration of moving it to a permanent portion of the budgeting process and if so when?  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  ICANN is pleased that the community finds this new resource to be working and improving their effectiveness. Continued feedback will help us to define the program parameters for future fiscal years. While the goal is to remove the “pilot” label for FY18, the program will be available for regular evaluation to fine-tune the services offered to the community and to determine if it can potentially be expanded to other groups as well.  The Secretariat Pilot Program is one of a series of initiatives over the past few years designed to provide expanded community resource support. Over the last few years, several new concepts and ideas presented within the framework of the Community Special Budget Request Process have been developed, tested and reviewed as pilot efforts to determine if consistent funding and human resource support can be made available to manage and deliver each new capability that gets introduced. This process has been successfully applied in a number of ways (for example, expanded GNSO community leadership travel – first for non-contracted and then more recently for contracted parties). This same process is being implemented with the secretariat pilot program.  In FY17 the GNSO Secretariat pilot will be under the core Policy Development Support budget for a final “pilot” year. The “pilot” term is still active because aspects of the program have only been in place for some communities for a relatively short period of time (it has been found that it takes time for community to “ramp-up” to effectively utilize and  manage their new resources). Retention of the “pilot” classification for this program is a reflection of the growth and flexibility of the program rather than a statement of its permanence, as all programs are evaluated every year to some degree.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **138.** | The Council wishes to recognize the support for the F2F PDP WG meetings Project and now properly allocated to the core Policy Team budget.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  Inclusion in the core policy development budget of F2F PDP WG Meetings at ICANN Public Meetings is an example of the effectiveness of the annual Community Special Budget Request Process. A few years ago, the concept of the F2F meeting sessions was proposed, approved on a provisional “pilot” basis, tested, evaluated and, over a period of a couple fiscal years, proven to be a productive use of organizational resources.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |

**Travel Funding**

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| **#** | **Comment** | **Contributor** | **Response / Action Taken** |
| **147.** | The GNSO Council Development Session has been funded the last three years as a pilot as part of the special community budget requests. As the evaluation of this pilot has clearly demonstrated the benefits, the GNSO Council welcomes that this project has now moved into the general budget and as a result has graduated from a pilot into a permanent feature. The GNSO Council fully supports this move and thanks ICANN for their continued support.  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  Inclusion of the annual GNSO Council Development Session in the core policy development budget is an example of the effectiveness of the annual Community Special Budget Request Process. A few years ago, the concept of the developmental session was proposed, approved on a provisional “pilot” basis, tested, evaluated and, over a period of a couple fiscal years, proven to be a productive use of organizational resources. A similar approach is now being tested on a pilot basis for the ALAC.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |
| **148.** | The Council notes that each fiscal year, both the CPH and  NCPH have annual retreats (CPH within GDD &  NCPH within Policy), and the monies spent has been a recent topic within the GNSO.   Goal 1.3 – Project 124780 - $100,000 for NCPH  Intersessional   Goal 2.1 – Project 124349 - $400,000 for GDD Summit  See full comment: <http://forum.icann.org/lists/comments->op-budget-fy17-five-year-05mar16/pdf6g8VOWVbLO.pdf | GNSO | **Response**  Inclusion of an annual intersessional meeting of the GNSO’s non- contracted parties in the core policy development budget is an example of the effectiveness of the annual Community Special Budget Request Process. A few years ago, the concept of the intersessional meeting was developed after several communities proposed individual intersessional meetings. Subsequently, the joint intersessional meeting was, tested on a pilot basis, evaluated and, over a period of a couple fiscal years, proven to be a productive use of organizational resources. The GDD Summit concept has evolved on a separate track and appears to be well received by the community.  **Changes to be made in final FY17 planning documents**  None |